Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1790 - December 2 2011

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1790 with a release date of Friday, December 2nd, 2011 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. An unwanted Christmas present as new rules on BPL to take effect on December 21st, the AO-51 ham radio satellite falls silent while ARISSSat One may be approaching its last days in space; hams in Germany hear the Mars Space Laboratory as it wings its way toward the red planet, New Zealand hams get a power upgrade, and the controversary over the speed of light continues. Find out the latest details are on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1790 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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THE BPL FIGHT: FCC SECOND R&O RULES TAKE EFFECT DECEMBER 21

Barring any last minute appeal by the American Radio Relay League or another entity, the FCC's latest order to revise rules for access Broadband over Powerline systems is set to become effective on December 21st. Amateur Radio Newsline's Heather Butera-Howell, KB3TZD, reports:

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The commission's second Broadband Over Powerline or BPL Report and Order was published in the Federal Register on November 22nd making the effective implementation date December 21st. However, Petitions for Reconsideration concerning it are also due on that same date. As such there is speculation that the ARRL may ask for a reconsideration before the implementation date arrives.

As previously reported here on Amateur Radio Newsline, the ARRL had argued there should be mandatory notching of the amateur bands to a level 35 dB below the general emission limit to reduce the likelihood of harmful interference to amateur stations. In the Second Report and Order the commission decided not to adopt mandatory notching. Instead, the agency increased the requirement for BPL systems to have the ability to notch frequency bands to at least 25 dB. This is an increase of 5 dB from the prior requirement of 20 dB.

The ARRL called the increase in notch depth a step in the right direction but said that doesn't go far enough to protect the amateur radio spectrum from harmful interference of the type known to be generated by Broadband over Powerline data transmission systems. The ARRL is on record as stating that it believes that now is the time to fix the rules by imposing mandatory notching of BPL signals in all of the Amateur Service spectrum. This is so that any new entrants will be competing on a level playing field with the existing Broadband over Powerline firms that have recognized the need for notching out of the amateur bands.

In other matters addressed in the Report and Order, the FCC also made technical adjustments to its rules for determining the distance between a power line and a measurement antenna and for determining site-specific extrapolation factors. This as part of a measurement standard modification for determining whether a BPL system is in compliance with the maximum allowable levels of radiated emissions.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Heather Butera-Howell, KB3TZD, from near Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.

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While Broadband over Powerline has failed in the marketplace as a medium for delivering broadband connectivity to consumers, the technology is perceived to have some `smart grid' power delivery and system monitoring applications.

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AO-51 GOES QRT

The AO-51 ham radio satellite has gone QRT. AMSAT-North America Vice President of Operations, Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA says that the bird has ceased transmission and is not responding to any commands from the ground.

Glasbrenner's announcement came on Tuesday November 29th. In making public word of the demise of AO-51, KO4MA, noted that the last telemetry data received had indicated that the third of six batteries that power AO-51 was approaching a short circuit condition. Also that further observation indicated the voltage from three remaining cells was insufficient to power the UHF transmitters. Initial tests with the S-band transmitter were also not positive either, although more attempts are expected.

Glasbrenner says that the control team tried leaving the satellite in a configuration where if voltages climb high enough, the 435.150 transmitter may possibly be heard. He says that the command team will regularly attempt communications with the satellite over the coming months noting that there is always the possibility that a cell will open from its short circuited state and make AO-51 useful once again.

And in a related item, word that Clint Bradford, K6LCS, is attempting to document the last VHF and UHF communications through AO-51. To find out more go to his special Web page for at tinyurl.com/AO51-DCARR.

The AO-51 ham radio satellite was on-orbit and serving the world-wide ham radio community for the better part of 7 years. (ANS, K6LCS, Others)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: ARISSAT-1 APPROACHING LAST DAYS ON-ORBIT

If you have been putting off trying to make contacts through the ARISSat One on-orbit repeater, the next few weeks will be your last

opportunity to be a part of this satellite's history.

Since deployment in August, ARISSat One has descended about 60 km, and is currently losing more than 1 point 5 km per day. The rapid rate is partially the result of the recent solar activity on the atmosphere, significantly increasing the drag.

The predictions by several individuals and groups are all converging toward a reentry of ARISSat One into the Earths atmosphere in January or February of 2012. Heating will become significant before then.

The orbit period changes about 30 seconds per day, and that will steadily increase. As the descent continues, this will become even more critical to copying the telemetry beacon.

The ARISSat One team says that getting good telemetry in this period will provide it with valuable information to be used in future projects. The latest information on the orbital health of ARISSat One is on-line at www.arissat1.org.

(WA4SCA)

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WORLDBEAT: NEW ZEALAND HAMS GRANTED POWER INCREASE TO A FULL GALLON

Hams in New Zealand are celebrating. This with word that their regulatory authority has granted then a power increase of up to one Kilowatt. Amateur Radio Newsline's Jim Meachen, ZL2BHF, is in Nelson, New Zealand with more:

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It has been suggested as a Christmas gift arriving early for amateur radio operators in New Zealand. That's the news from the countries Communications Regulator, Radio Spectrum Management that it has agreed to a request from New Zealand's National Amateur Radio Society, NZART, that the general power limit for Amateur bands be increased. NZART Members were informed of the news by their President Roy Symon, ZL2KH, on the Society's National Broadcast on Sunday 27th November.

>From the 30th November 2011, the power limit for most NZ amateur bands bands will rise from 500 watts to 1000 watts peak envelope power as defined in ITU Radio Regulation 1.157. The only exception to this power increase is for those bands (130 to 190 kHz, 505 to 515 kHz, 26.95 to 27.30 MHz and 921.00 to 928.00 MHz) which currently have lower limits and, in these cases, the current limits will continue to apply.

This result is seen as a very satisfactory conclusion to the Hawkes Bay Amateur Radio club Remit submitted to the 2010 NZART Conference. It will assist New Zealand Amateurs to participate in weak signal work including EME, meteor scatter, DXing etc and to also remain competitive, despite New Zealand's remoteness, when participating in contests.

Reporting from sunny Nelson, New Zealand, I'm Jim Meachen ZL2BHF for

Newsline.

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According to ZL2BHF, a November 28th news release from the Wireless Institute of Australia's Peter Young, VK3MV, indicates that the New Zealand decision may well be the needed catalyst for the ongoing discussions between that national society and the Australian regulator ACMA. This in regard to a similar power increase for Australian Advanced class licensees. (NZART)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the W9UVI repeater of the Peoria Amateur Radio Club serving the city of Peoria Illinois.

(5 sec pause here)

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REACHING OUT: ARRL TO RELEASE NEW VIDEO AIMED AT MAKER COMMUNITY ON DECEMBER 27

'The DIY Magic of Amateur Radio' is a new 8 and one half minute video from the American Radio Relay League to be released on Tuesday, December 27th. Its target audience is the world-wide maker and hacker community. Amateur Radio Newsline's Cheryl Lasek, K9BIK, has more:

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According to the ARRL, the show is directed toward the D-I-Y or Do It Yourself movement. This is a fairly new leisure time interest that is inspiring a whole new generation of techno hobbyists. It also could be a pool of future technologists who might want to become hams if they knew morew about our hobby and that's the reason the new video was created.

To do this, Executive Producer Allen Pitts, W1AGP and Producer Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF brought together an all-star team consisting of several well known film makers along with some newcomers to ham radio movie making.

Directed by Hollywood's Dave Bell, W6AQ, the video which is titled "The Do It Yourself Magic of Amateur Radio" was recorded on location in Ohio, Texas, North Carolina, California, Utah and on-orbit aboard the International Space Station.

It's script was written by Henry Feinberg, K2SSQ, of West Orange New Jersey. Feinberg is a former producer of the award-winning Watch Mr. Wizard science television series. A winner of several Cine Golden Eagle awards, K2SSQ is also the ham radio operator who created the

umbrella space communicator seen in the Steven Spielberg motion picture "ET the Extraterrestrial."

The show is hosted by famed New York City based maker community leader and fashion designer Diana Eng, KC2UHB. Mark Abramovich, NT3V, serves as the show narrator.

Original music was provided by Andrew-John Huddleston, Oh-Zed-5-E, and his Denmark-based group "The Ham Band."

Dave Booth, KC6WFS, of Santa Clarita, California was the shows principal videographer.

According to the ARRL, the new video will be simultaneously released on its Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages, and will be also be available at www.arrl.org. DVD copies for showing to large audiences in high definition 16 by 9 wide screen and standard 4 by 3 definitions will be available at a later date.

For the Amateur radio Newsline, I'm Cheryl Lasek, K9BIK, reporting from Zion, Illinois

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Again that's Tuesday, December 27th at about 10 a.m. Eastern U.S. time for the release of the new ARRL video titled The Do It Yourself Magic of Amateur Radio. It's a magic carpet ride into a pair of techno-hobby worlds that compliment one another very well. (ARRL, DIY Production Team)

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RADIO IN THE MEDIA: FOX NEWS REPORTS HAM RADIO GROWTH

Fox News reports on the boom in Amateur Radio licenses in the United States. According to Fox, in October the FCC logged 700,314 licenses, with nearly 40,000 new ones issued in the last five years.

In her report Michelle Macaluso interviews John Pritchett W6JWK. She also shows an Amateur Radio Direction Finding competition. Her story is titled Radio Days Are Back: Ham Radio Licenses at an All-Time High. You will find it on-line at tinyurl.com/fox-ham-stats. (QRZ.COM)

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RADIO LAW: WALDEN RELEASES SPECTRUM AUCTION MEASURE

United States House of Representatives Communications Subcommittee Chairman Greg Walden, W7EQI, and other GOP panel members have introduced a version of a broadcast spectrum incentive auction bill. The measure would authorize the FCC to reclaim spectrum from broadcasters for re-auction and compensate them from the proceeds. It also sets aside money to compensate broadcasters who elect not to give up spectrum for the costs of moving to another channel or sharing channels with another broadcaster. It also covers the costs incurred by cable operators of moving their systems to accommodate such a

change. The end result of the bill is to allocate spectrum for an interoperable broadband public safety network. That also would align the measure more closely with the Senate version that has already passed out of the Commerce Committee there. More on this proposed measure is on-line at tinyurl.com/walden-auction-bill. (B&C)

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RADIO BUSINESS: MIRACLE ANTENNA SUSPENDS ORDER TAKING DUE TO ILLNESS OF VA2ERY

If you are planning to purchase a product from Miracle Antenna, be aware that the company has temporarily stopped taking orders. According to a notice on its website, online ordering has been temporarily suspended due to medical illness and to please check back with us soon.

For those not aware, Miracle Antenna is the Montreal Canada-based company that manufactures the very popular Miracle Whip and other accessory items that are extremely popular with both the QRP and H F back-pack communities. An e-mail received by Bryan Herbert, KE6ZGP, and forwarded to Newsline confirms that Robert Victor, VA2ERY, is quite ill and that his family has stepped in to help with running the business.

According to the e-mail to Herbert, for the moment the Victor family is only filling standing orders and answering e-mails. Anyone wishing to contact the family or to send get well wishes to Robert Victor, VA2ERY, may do so by e-mail to info (at) miracleantenna (dot) com. For information updates please keep an eye on miracleantenna.com. (KE6ZGP, others)

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RADIO BUSINESS: MORSE DECODER FOR MAC

If you are a ham who uses an Apple computer, then here's something just for you. The Southgate news reports that Morse Decoder is a simple to use Mac OS X application for translating Morse Code sounds into text. The program uses the built-in microphone on an Apple Mac with both audio filtering and DSP signal analysis.

Morse Code Decoder also includes a built-in spectrogram to detect the audio frequency of the Morse Code tones, and an optional narrow band audio filter to help filter out background noise.

More information is on-line at tinyurl.com/mac-morse-decoder. And if you do give Morse Decoder a try please let us know how well it works. Nobody here at Amateur Radio Newsline has a Mac to try it ourselves. (Southgate)

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HAM HONORS: DAYTON HAMVENTION SOLICITING NOMINATIONS FOR 2012 AWARDS

>From now through January 15th he nominating period is open for the 2012 Dayton Hamvention Awards. As in previous years, the Hamvention will

honor three deserving individuals with the Technical Excellence, Special Achievement, and Amateur of the Year Awards. Also receiving recognition will be a ham radio group or organization which will be selected as Radio Club of the Year. To be considered for any of these awards the nominations must be submitted no later than January 15, 2012. Nomination forms and instructions on how to file are on-line at hamvention.org/awards.php. (WS8B, Hamvention 2011)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: HAMVENTION 2012 GETS NEW ASSISTANT GENERAL CHAIRMAN

Also from the Dayton Hamvention comes word that General Chairman Mike Kalter W8CI, announced the appointment of Charles Kaiser, KD8JZR, as the events new Assistant General Chairman. Kaiser replaced Josh Long, KD8BVD, who stepped down because of work commitments.

The Dayton Hamvention is the world's largest amateur radio gathering. It opens May 18, 2012, and runs for three days at the Hara Arena in surban Trotwood, Ohio. This will be its sixty-first consecutive year and planners believe that more than 20,000 people will attend the 2012 outing

For more information about Dayton Hamvention 2012 please visit the website at www.hamvention.org or e-mail media@hamvention.org on the World-Wide-Web. (Hamvention)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: HAM HELPS OPEN NEW SPACE EXHIBIT AT AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY IN NYC

The American Museum of Natural History has raised the curtain on its brand new space exhibition with help from two seasoned space travelers one of whom is an amteur radio operator.

NASA astronauts Mike Massimino and John Grunsfeld, KC5ZTF both flew on the last space shuttle mission to service the Hubble Space Telescope. The two were on hand at the museum to introduce a new exhibition called "Beyond Planet Earth: The Future of Space Exploration."

The American Museum of Natural History is located on Central Park West at 79th Street in New York City. The new space exhibit will run through August 12, 2012. More is on-line at www.amnh.org/exhibitions/beyond. (Space.com)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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WORLDBEAT: SOUTH AFRICA'S DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS WITHDRAWS UNPOPULAR AMENDMENTS

In news from around the world, word that South Africa's Department of Communications has withdrawn a proposed and very controversial Electronic Communications Act amendment bill. This, for further consultation with that nations government leadership.

The proposed amendments to the Electronic Communications Act would have diminished the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa power on several fronts. This would have included frequency allocation and spectrum management by giving a government Minister more power over these issues.

There was widespread opposition across South Africa to the proposed amendments. At airtime it is not certain as to when South Africa's Department of Communications will publish revised changes to the Electronic Communications Act, if at all.

According to the South African Radio League this issue was high on its agenda to be considered and discussed. Now however as matters currently stands, the SARL sees no further action required at this time. (SARL)

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WORLDBEAT: RSGB ANNOUNCES UK CLUB OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

If you like n the United Kingdom, this one is for you. The Radio Society of Great Britain has announced its Club of the Year Competition now open.

The Club of the Year Competition is described as an RSGB Regional Team initiative designed to encourage local radio clubs to do more in their communities to promote amateur radio. Locally based, the idea is get recognition of a club's efforts by the amateur radio community.

The competition will be independently judged and will concentrate on a club's contribution to promoting amateur radio, its contribution to training and education, its work in charitable activities and general club activities. Each region will get to present its own trophy and all the trophy winners from around the UK will be entered into a national competition where we select a National Club of the Year and two runner ups.

More about this competition is on-line at www dot rsgb dot org slash clubooftheyear. This is an idea that other national societies around the world might want to consider making into a global competition event. (Southgate)

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RADIO IN SPACE: HAMS HEAR MARS SCIENCE LAB AS IT FLIES TOWARD MARS

The world's largest ever built extraterrestrial explorer is on its way to Mars. The six-wheeled, one-armed robotic rover named Curiosity known officially as the Mars Science Laboratory blasted off from Cape Canaveral at 10:02 a.m. Eastern time on Saturday, November 26th. It was carried into space on board an Atlas Five launch vehicle. The journey to Mars will take 8 months and cover 354 million miles.

Meantime a group of radio amateurs have received signals from the Mars Science Laboratory using an AMSAT DL amateur radio facility in Germany. Barely 7 hours after launch, the X-band telemetry signal from the lab was received using the ham radio station at the German AMSAT group's resource at Bochum.

This is believed to be the first reception of the Mars Science Laboratory outside of the NASA Deep Space Network. The signal, received by the ham operators was with the probe at a distance of 112,000 km from Earth. Telemetry said the enroute lab had a spin-modulation of +/- 3.5 Hz at 2 revolutions per minute.

The Mars Science Laboratory is expected to arrive at the red planet in August 2012 after a nine month flight. (AMSAT DL)

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ON THE AIR: CELEBRATING THE CBC/RADIO CANADA 75th ANNIVERSARY

On the air, listen out for some special prefixes to be used by Canadian hams during the month of December. From December 1st to the 31st the prefixes . VG, VX, XJ and XK will be utilized by those Canadian radio amateurs who wish to help celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and Radio Canada.

Better known as CBC/Radio-Canada, the famed broadcaster offers programming in English, French and eight aboriginal languages on its domestic radio service. It also broadcasts in nine languages on its international radio service known as Radio Canada International. A recent addition is its Web-based eight language RCI Viva. This is described as being a service for recent and aspiring immigrants to Canada. (Georgian Bay Amateur Radio Club, Wikipedia Commons)

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DX

In DX, word that six operators from the U.S. and Canada will be active from Kiritimati Island between January 17th and February 2nd. The group will operate from the same location that the recent T32C expedition utilized. They also will take part in the 2012 CQ World Wide 160 meter CW Contest from January 27th to the 29th as T32XX. QSL via KB8TXZ.

AH0AJ will beactive as KG4AJ from Guantanamo Bay for the next two years. QSL only via his home callsign.

Members of the Pacific DXers will be on the air from Tuvalu as T2T through December 8th. Activity is on 160 through 6 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK31. Logbook of the World and eQSL will be uploaded within 12 months after the operation is completed. QSL via VK4FW direct or via the bureau.

Lastly, CX3AN and CX4CR will be active on the air as 8Q7HU from Maafushi Island in the Maldives between January 25th and February 5th. Their operations will be on 80 through 6 meters using CW, SSB and several digital modes with a special emphasis on contacting South America. QSL this one as directed on the air.

Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: SCIENTISTS REJECT OTHER SCIENTISTS ON NEUTRINO FASTER THAN LIGHT

A Follow-up to last weeks story about a group of researchers at CERN who say that they have shown particles that can exceed the speed of light. An international team of scientists in Italy studying the same neutrino particles has now rejected the findings and saying their tests had shown it to be wrong. Here's Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, with the latest on this scientific controversary:

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As reported last week, the September announcement of particles exceeding the speed of light along with the recent finding after new studies backed up the original claim has caused a firestorm of sorts in the scientific world. This was because it seems to suggest Albert Einstein's ideas on relativity, and much of modern physics, are based on a mistaken premise.

The first team, members of the OPERA experiment at the Gran Sasso laboratory south of Rome, said they recorded neutrinos beamed to them from the CERN research center in Switzerland as arriving 60 nanoseconds before light would have done. But ICARUS, another experiment at Gran Sasso argues that their measurements of the neutrinos energy on arrival contradict that reading.

In a paper posted on the same website as the OPERA results, the ICARUS team says their findings refute a faster than light interpretation of the OPERA result. They argue, on the basis of recently published studies by two top U.S. physicists, that the neutrinos pumped down from CERN, near Geneva, should have lost most of their energy if they had travelled at even a tiny fraction faster than light.

But in fact, the ICARUS scientists say, the neutrino beam as tested in their equipment registered an energy spectrum fully corresponding with what it should be for particles traveling at the speed of light and no more. Physicist Tomasso Dorigo, who works at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, and the U.S. Fermilab near Chicago, said in a post on the website Scientific Blogging that the ICARUS paper was very simple and definitive.

Under Einstein's 1905 Special Theory of Relativity, nothing can travel faster than light. That idea lies at the heart of all current science of the cosmos and of how the vast variety of particles that make it up behave. There was widespread skepticism when the OPERA findings were first revealed, and even the leaders of the experiment insisted that they were not announcing a discovery but simply recording measurements they had made and carefully checked.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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Other experiments are being prepared at Fermilab and at the KEK laboratory in Japan to try to duplicate OPERA's findings. Confirmation from one of these would open the way for a full scientific discovery to be declared. Failure to duplicate the OPERA team findings would likely put the matter to rest. At least for the time being. (Published news sources)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline (at) arnewsline (dot) org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Damron, N8TMW, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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